

IV Higher Education

Strategy I: Proactively disseminate information to parents concerning higher education so they will support their students academically, physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually and financially.

Goal: To empower parents in assisting their children to graduate from high school, identify appropriate post-secondary programs, and ensure their continued success.

Objective: Increase the rate of American Indian/Alaska Native students participation in post-secondary education by 10% per year.

Action Steps:

- Post-secondary students and/or representative outreach teams will meet with community and parents.
- Develop American Indian/Alaska Native specific materials with appropriate web connections and resources.
- Parents will request college and university administrators to develop an outreach and retention program.
- Proactively disseminate higher education information to parents, students, and counselors.
- Develop a parent orientation program to familiarize parents with the campus experience, conducted on or off campus, as needed.
- Interface with agencies and organizations that work with American Indian/Alaska Native parents such as PTA, Utah Family Center, IPAC, school counselors, Indian Parent Action Committee, and the Tribal Indian Education departments.

Strategy II: Assure that each campus has a quality Native American Indian/Alaska Native retention program that creates an accepting environment for all Native American students and families.

Goal: To create a supportive environment that provides services to assist all American Indian/Alaska Native students in obtaining their educational goals.

Objective: Ensure that 100% of American Indian/Alaska Native students entering post-secondary education complete programs with certificates, degrees or diplomas.

Action Steps:

- Establish research-based best practices for American Indian/Alaska Native retention.
- Establish rewards for staff, faculty and students who assist American Indian/Alaska Native students' success.
- Establish in-service for all staff and faculty on American Indian/Alaska Native cultural competency, with student input, and identify appropriate support services.

Higher Education 2

- Create a system-wide database to track American Indian/Alaska Native students graduation/completions rate especially between 2-year and 4-year programs.
- Present annually at conferences, pow-wows, and recognition events, to celebrate American Indian/Alaska Native educational accomplishments.

Strategy III: To increase availability and opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of American Indian/Alaskan Native cultures.

Goal: To increase the number of graduates who are culturally competent.

Objective: Create a major and/or minor in American Indian/Alaska Native studies.

Action Steps:

- Create legislation to mandate and fund creation of a major and minor in American Indian/Alaska Native Studies.
- Gain commitment of Utah Higher Education system.
- Work with appropriate colleges to identify and develop courses.
- Hire culturally competent faculty as necessary, American Indian/Alaska Native preferred.
- Provide information and encourage student enrollment.
- Establish mechanism so that American Indian/Alaska Native languages are academically accepted as foreign languages to fulfill language requirements.

Strategy IV: Create an American Indian/Alaska Native endorsement for teaching candidates of American Indian students.

Goal: To establish cultural competency and awareness among teachers of American Indian/Alaska Native students.

Objective: To decrease the number of American Indian/Alaska Native dropouts by 100% by creating a culturally sensitive, nurturing and safe classroom environment.

Action Steps:

- Identify appropriate standards and competencies for endorsement.
- Involve American Indian/Alaska Native educators, Tribal Education Directors, and Division of Indian Affairs in the development of the standards and competencies.
- Institutionalize the endorsement at each campus that has a College of Education.